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## Understanding the contemporary race–migration nexus

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### ABSTRACT

The linkage between race and migration, especially in the UK since the 1990s, has shifted from a focus on postcolonial migrants to focus on newer groups, while migration within the European Union has also altered the discussion of racism and migration. This critical review provides a framework for understanding how race is conceptualized (or ignored) in contemporary scholarship on migration. We identify three, partly overlapping nexi between migration and racialization: (1) ‘Changing Migrations – Continuities of Racism’; (2) ‘Complex Migrations – Differentialist Racialization’; (3) ‘Post-racial Migrations – Beyond Racism’. The article analyses what each of these nexi bring into focus as well as what they neglect. The concept of race–migration nexus aids a fuller understanding of how migration and contemporary racialization are co-constructed. Scholars need to consider the relationship between migration and race to better address pressing issues of racism against migrants and settled communities.

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### Introduction

The academic study of migration, ethnicity and racism were once largely co-terminous, particularly in the UK. In a context where migrants or ‘immigrants’ meant racialized people of Caribbean, Asian and African origin, the reasons for this close connection are evident (cf. Khan and Weekes-Bernard 2015). That focus obscured other kinds of migrants, particularly ‘white’ migrants, leading one researcher to observe the absence of a body of literature constituting a sociology of migration (Phizacklea 1984). In the last two decades and particularly since the expansion of the European Union (EU), there has been extensive research on migration. The various ways of categorizing migrants who arrive from countries within and beyond Europe have given impetus

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to important questions about how the relationship between race, racialization and migration is conceived in an era of overlapping national and international border controls.

Although race has seemingly disappeared as a public policy issue, we think it is analytically central as racial inequalities remain socially pervasive. For instance, although there is more differentiation within groups, racial inequalities persist in income, access to jobs, health and education (Institute for Race Relations 2015). At the same time, in mainland Europe, the question of race has been configured quite differently, from the 'race-blind' republican tradition of France, to the focus on ethnicity rather than race in Germany, in which there is an avoidance of race as an analytical concept (Grigolo, Hermandin, and Möschel 2011). However, across the EU the landscape and content of migration debates has been altered significantly. While the main empirical thrust of this article is on research about and from the UK, we think it is important to contextualize that with regard to some work from and about continental European countries, since there has been a long-standing debate on the analytical linkages between migration and race from which our analysis has benefitted. We do not claim that simply by drawing on some key examples from continental Europe we can fully do justice to this diverse context. Instead we are mobilizing these analyses to support our understanding of the UK in a wider context.

Two brief examples illustrate why the UK cannot be discussed in isolation from the rest of Europe. One is that the 'European anxiety' regarding the place of Islam in Europe, and in the public sphere, has raised new debates about cultural otherness in terms of toleration (Meer 2013) as the case of the headscarf in France illustrates (Parekh 2006). This issue is linked to declining support for multiculturalism and the rise of right-wing political parties and movements in Britain and Europe. Second, wars in Africa and the Middle East have added to the flow of migrants, with 2015 witnessing unprecedented numbers of refugees reaching the continent's southern borders and on to countries beyond such as Germany and Sweden. Migrants often take desperate measures and unsanctioned journeys to cross the Mediterranean Sea. In response, many Southern European states have increasingly militarized their immigration controls. As migrants challenge their position as outsiders, they also contest the legitimacy of European exclusionary migration and asylum policies (Holmes and Castañenda 2016). Thus, Europe's 'cultural' and physical borders have come under strain in ways that do not allow any individual members of the EU to exist in isolation.

## **The race-immigration landscape**

Understanding the contemporary ways in which race and racism relate to migration has become urgent for scholars and anti-racist activists (Davison

and Shire 2015; Saenz and Douglas 2015; Treitler 2013). This critical review of how race and racism figure in contemporary migration research aims to clarify the ways in which the relations between race and migration are currently configured. While British scholarship on race and racism has often been in dialogue with US scholarship, recent work on migration to the UK has begun to take more notice of European debates. This has taken place at a time where British research foci have shifted from research on 'race relations' towards the study of migration, often in the context of policy concerns of social cohesion and integration. Additionally, critical work on migration issues in other parts of Europe has problematized a lack of engagement in migration research with questions of race and racism (e.g. El-Tayeb 2011; Erel 2009; Wilpert 2003). A recent discourse and content analysis of highly cited works on European migration and ethnic minority scholarship finds that the concepts of race and racism are rarely spoken about (Lentin 2014). Recognition of racism as a structuring feature of European societies is needed to address how Europe's migration regimes articulate and are articulated by racialization and coloniality (Gutiérrez Rodríguez, Boatca, and Costa 2010; Lentin 2014; Mignolo 2012; Möschel 2011).

This review draws on recent literature on migration and race, mainly in the UK context, with some supporting key examples from other European countries. We began with a systematic literature review entailing a title and keyword search of 'race', 'racism' and 'migration' using Web of Science, JSTOR and publishers websites from 1989 to June 2014. The initial focus was papers where race is implicitly or explicitly referred to in the title, abstract or the substance of the work: 442 articles that included the word 'race'; 239 articles that included the word 'racism' and 439 that included the word 'migration'. In selecting a smaller sample to focus on, we used the criteria of how representative they were for exemplifying the contemporary theoretical strands of inquiry into race and migration. We have had to make choices as to what to include and inevitably there are exclusions; we do not claim to have exhaustively explored all the ways in which the literature links migration and racialization.

Our critical review argues there are a number of ways in which the connection between race and migration is conceived. Three articulations of the race–migration nexus are identified:

- (1) 'Changing Migrations – Continuities of Racism'; this approach emphasizes the continuity of historic linkages between post-war race-making and migration, underlining similarities between racialized citizens and non-citizens as subjects of migration discourse.
- (2) 'Complex Migrations – Differentialist Racialization'; this approach focuses on processes of racialization that differentially shape migrant subjects to effect disadvantages unique to their citizenship status. It also highlights

intersecting formations of race. It does not deny that race is analytically relevant for understanding migration, rather it explores how connections between racialization and migration are shaped through gender, class and geography.

- (3) 'Post-racial Migrations – Beyond Racism'; this approach raises the question as to whether race, racism and racialization are meaningful analytical categories for making sense of distinctions between host and immigrant, and between old and newer migration discourses, amounting to a denial of the significance of race and racism.

The three nexi emerged as key themes in much of the work reviewed. While recognizing that they do not cover all arguments in this wide-ranging literature we found that versions of these approaches appear either implicitly or explicitly in many works. For current purposes, we have sorted these into three nexi; these can be thought of like lenses on a camera in bringing particular constellations of the migration–racialization nexus into analytical focus, while other aspects of this constellation remain in the background. However, these lenses or nexi are not mutually exclusive, they do not amount to a coherent theorization, even though they are supported by particular theories. In fact, some pieces of research contain more than one nexus, and scholars may choose to emphasize different strands in different works. So, it is not our intention to propose these nexi to categorize particular pieces or schools of research. Instead, we see them as heuristic devices, which can be helpful in identifying some key structures and arguments in the literature. While not explicitly mapping onto a specific theory, we argue in the conclusion that these nexi have implications for an anti-racist politics, not so much mapping out a clear direction, but rather in inviting future research to consider how analytical points of departure for engaging with race–migration relate to anti-racist politics.

In identifying these nexi, the paper addresses a number of conceptual issues: How do new and settled communities shape and are shaped by migration discourses? How do migrants emerge as subjects of, or beyond, racism? Each race–migration nexus addresses these questions in different ways. In outlining the main claims of each nexus, we assess their contribution to understanding contemporary migration. Providing a survey of how race has been used for making sense of new migrations, or absent from analysis, is a first but necessary step in improving our understanding of the changing relationship between race and migration. The analytical overview here addresses the multiple, often discrepant, ways migrants are discussed in racialized and (post-) racial terms.

Analytically, the paper draws on the concept of racialization, highlighting how the construction of race is shaped historically and how the usage of that idea forms a basis for exclusionary practices through cultural or political

processes where race is invoked as an explanation and specific ideological practices in which race is deployed (Murji and Solomos 2005). Drawing on Kibria, Bowman, and O'Leary, we take a social constructionist approach to race as a political project rooted in colonialism and imperialism, viewing race as an ascribed but highly generative difference, 'given and used by those in power to define others as different and inferior' (2013, 3). As an exclusionary practice of co-constituting hierarchies an 'us' and 'them' in essentialized terms, this process of racialization implies the formation of a 'separate species' without necessarily relying upon notions of biological distinctiveness (Sheth 2009, 51). The performative force of race shapes racial boundaries through ideas, practices and institutions that 'have consequences for those who are defined by them, in terms of choices, opportunities and resources' (Kibria, Bowman, and O'Leary 2013, 4). Therefore, we propose to analyse the race-migration nexus as 'a fluid and intertwined bundle of linkages between race and immigration, specifically among the institutions, ideologies, and practices that define these arenas' (Kibria, Bowman, and O'Leary 2013, 5).

### **The 'Changing Migrations – Continuities of Racism' nexus**

The first nexus for conceptualizing race and migration emphasizes the continuity between recent political debates and ones from the 1950s onwards. The stress on continuity suggests that racism is still an important aspect of contemporary migration discourses, even if the groups targeted and some of the issues have altered. It also suggests that the status of racially subjugated citizens, from the former colonies but long settled in Europe, can be compared to the position of newer groups even though they have a different citizenship status.

Although in the 1950s opinion polls in the UK revealed a general preference for 'coloured' Commonwealth immigrants over European aliens (Miles 1990, 284), during the early post-war years, European migrant workers were recruited into labour shortage sectors on contracts tying them to their employment. While their working conditions and conditional immigration status marked them as Other, their categorization as white rendered them desirable immigrants in the eyes of government and employers (McDowell 2009). However, the 1960s response to immigration overwhelmingly shifted towards more stringent controls regulating Commonwealth citizens' arrival (Miles 1990, 284). This disproportionately affected non-white Commonwealth citizens. From the 1960s onwards, political discourse re-cast Commonwealth citizens from fellow subjects to 'immigrants'. Over the following decades, decolonization and increasing migration from Commonwealth countries meant that the 'multi-racial family' of the Commonwealth became reconceived as a 'domestic' problem of 'multi-racial' Britain (Webster 2005, 158). A stratification of immigrants prevailed between white and non-white, and

within these categories (Ford 2011, 1033). In nations such as Germany, where migrants were recruited as 'guest workers' who could not easily naturalize, the recruitment of foreign workers from Europe was also preferred to those from Africa and Asia (Schönwälder 2004).

Thus, the key theme in such research is how the subjects of post-war racialization continue to be produced through contemporary migration regimes. It highlights the role of racially selective migration policies, arguing that the same logic of official and popular racism separating citizens who 'belong' from those who do not (Hampshire 2005, 17) is reproduced through current migration regimes. Where migration legislation of the post-war period restricted entry of black commonwealth citizens while largely continuing to allow white migration through the Patriality Act (1968), the current points-based system indirectly favours 'EU (European, White, Christian) entrants' (McGhee 2009, 53–54). This is underlined in Garner's (2007, 14) concept of the EU as a 'racial supra-state', effectively precluding non-EU low-skilled workers from entry except through non-work-related routes such as family migration, asylum or as undocumented migrants (Yuval-Davis, Anthias, and Kofman 2005).

These approaches draw attention to the institutional racism of EU migration policy in creating or reinforcing classed and racialized occupational pathways for new migrants. For example, migrants from outside the EU get disproportionately channelled into lower paid jobs. A study of Ghanaian migrants in London demonstrates how racialized discrimination in the labour market is reinforced by immigration status, with those holding temporary residence and restrictions on work (e.g. student visas) finding it difficult to access skilled jobs (Herbert et al. 2008, 107–109). This analysis connects to the racial dimensions of the 'fortress Europe' thesis where internal borders of exclusion co-exist with Europe's external frontiers of exclusion. The European dimension is emphasized in research with Nigerian, Somali and Eritrean migrants in Italy who referred to 'Europe' as the end point of their journey (Kovačič and Erjavec 2010, 174–175). Prior to migration, they viewed the EU as a space of opportunity and potential equality, yet once inside this gave way to a perception of the EU as mired in exclusion and racism (Kovačič and Erjavec 2010, 180–181). This sheds a critical light on the European self-presentation as birthplace and haven of human rights, an image that is shattered by a common experience of African migrants' disillusionment. By scrutinizing the European level, such research addresses a new, supra-national site of institutional racism, but continues to work with clear boundaries between a white Europe and black immigrants. Other research shows that such an approach needs to be complemented by considering how Europeans, too, can be subjected to racialization.

The example of Roma holding European citizenship provides an apt example for the racialization of EU citizens and its contradictory articulation

in migration policy. The treatment of the Roma presents a case where racialized national immigration regimes came into conflict with the EU's basic tenet of European citizens' freedom of movement. Despite many holding formal rights of EU citizenship, entitling them to intra-EU mobility, Roma were targeted for deportation from an EU member state. Gehring documents how the French expulsion of Roma, who held a European member states' citizenship, in 2010 was met by condemnation from the European Commission (the body assigned to ensure EU laws are respected), which in turn prompted an 'anti-Roma summit' of German, Greek, Italian, UK, Spanish and Belgian interior ministers (2013, 18). In the event, these member states accepted the Commission's rebuke, although the Commission did not have the capacity to ensure member states comply with its directives (Gehring 2013, 22). This shows how the racialization of Roma people, the largest national minority within the EU, curtails their ability to substantiate their formal rights. The racial labelling of Roma in the EU has subjected them to de facto immigration control unlike other EU migrants. This illustrates how racialization of groups, such as the Roma, internally differentiates those holding European citizenship for the purpose of border control.

It has been argued that the racialization of European migrants has a longer history, reaching into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For instance, post-war Irish immigrants to the UK were racialized, leading Kushner to argue that 'racialization cuts across such constructed binaries as white/black, colonizer/colonized' (2005, 221). Meer (2013) has made a similar argument around the racialization of Islam and Judaism over more than four centuries in Europe. What is distinctive in the contemporary European context is how the so-called new racisms become applied to white migrants. Fox, Moroşanu, and Szilassy (2012, 685–691) argue that while European migrants to the UK may experience racialized inclusion on the basis of shared whiteness, this can be accompanied by media discourses utilizing a culturalist discourse as a basis of exclusion. Fox et al.'s study looks at the construction of different Eastern European groups and exemplifies an approach that draws attention to a fluidly conceived relationship between migration and racialization; it argues that particular groups of migrants are 'whitened' or 'darkened' (Fox, Moroşanu, and Szilassy 2012, 692) as a means of legitimating exclusion.

The ways in which racialization and immigration are connected affects the ability to attain formal citizenship. An example of this is the Secure Borders, Safe Haven White Paper, 2002, which instigated a process of recasting contemporary debates on migration as issues of integration and citizenship, moving away from explicit naming of race and equality (Back et al. 2002). In turn, integration has been made a precondition for acquiring British citizenship. As integration becomes a quality, it is assessed through knowledge of language and 'British life' (McGhee 2006, 118–120). The requirement that migrants integrate was presented as contributing to harmonious



communities free from racism and segregation; indeed, stringent immigration controls were presented as a means of regulating animosity between ethnic groups (Kyriakides 2008, 606).

This 'new assimilationism' (Back et al. 2002) echoes the language of 'good race relations' of post-war Britain. Yet, there is a key difference: even if for post-war migrants equality was presented as conditional on their integration, by and large postcolonial migrants already held British citizenship. In the current policy, migrants' integration is seen as precondition for achieving formal rights of residence and finally citizenship. More specifically, as Blackledge argues, institutional racism is perpetuated through language as a marker of difference – political emphasis on making English proficiency a condition for citizenship and integration links community cohesion, integration and immigration policy. He concludes that 'English language dominance is conflated with a racialised "white" dominance, the extension of an existing gatekeeping device to prevent the participation in society of some linguistic minorities can be nothing other than discriminatory' (Blackledge 2006, 77). Language tests for immigrants have been introduced in Europe to ensure they are able to communicate and autonomously participate in the institutions of state and society (Goodman 2010, 15). However, this official rhetoric obscures that for many recent and older immigrants (such as British Asians) availability of affordable language courses, rather than unwillingness to learn is a problem. Presenting both groups as unwilling or unable to learn the official language of the host country can thus serve as an argument of unassimilable cultural difference. Language and values function as a civically agreed necessity, albeit a post-racial mask for new processes of racializing migrants (Lentin and Titley 2011). This occurs on a European-wide scale as progressively blurred culturalist and racist politics of integration serve to legitimate increasingly stringent immigration controls on third country nationals: formal tests for citizenship were practised in six countries in 1998, rising to nineteen by 2010 (Goodman 2010, 16). Therefore, the demand to integrate is posed not simply to new migrants but also to established ethnic minority groups, both of whom are subjected to processes of racialization.

The nexus of a largely unchanging racism can give the impression that the racialization of ethnic minority nationals and recent migrants is based on the same constructions of difference from a 'host' society. For example, Ehrkamp (2006) uses terms such as 'Turkish immigrants' in contrast to 'White Germans' unintentionally collapsing settled and recent Turkish arrivals. This leads to the assumption that informal belonging (experienced through everyday Othering) and formal belonging (whether one is a Turkish–German citizen or a recently arrived migrant with Turkish citizenship) mutually reinforce each other. To the extent that this analysis is true, it emphasizes continuity between recent migrants and second- or third-generation children of

migrants. As a rhetorical political device, it supports intergenerational solidarity in the face of racism. Yet, it does not pay attention to the stratifying power of citizenship and migration status (Morris 2003). In the case of migrants with Turkish citizenship and German-Turks, this continuous experience of racialization and positioning as newcomers without social rights, can arguably be related to the ongoing group replenishment through new migrants, including family migrants, from Turkey to Germany (Jiménez 2008). However, whether or not group replenishment is ongoing, the strategy of casting ethnic groups as if they were recent arrivals is in itself an extremely effective form of racialization. The expansive category of 'immigrant' constructs and justifies its polysemic subjects as ever external to the European nation, and therefore unentitled (El-Tayeb 2011). The continuing analytical relevance of racialization resides in how racialized subjects are produced despite changing markers of difference applied to migrants. This outlook underscores the notion that the relationship between racism and migration has remained largely unchanged from the post-war New Commonwealth arrivals, minority ethnic 'communities' through to contemporary non-white migrants.

While the 'Changing Migrations – Continuities of Racism' nexus is valuable for capturing the continuities of racialization diachronically and across its shifting social referents, it elides the complex issues of how racialization operates differently depending on citizenship status. The next nexus assessed attempts to redress this issue.

### **The 'Complex Migrations – Differential Racialization' nexus**

In 2013 the UK Home Office launched a campaign in which vans in some parts of the country carried a message inviting illegal immigrants to 'Go Home'. The message was intended for undocumented migrants, but it was swiftly perceived as a 'repatriation' agenda for all racialized nationals (Jones et al. 2015). The Go Home campaign exemplifies how immigrant status continues to be a 'temporary and permanent condition', sustained through 'informal' controls on belonging such as 'race', culture and religion (El-Tayeb 2008, 651–652). Viewing the Go Home campaign through the 'Changing Migrations – Continuities of Racism' nexus, as discussed in the previous section, suggests the continuing slippage between racialized nationals and recent arrivals from overseas. However, the message of the campaign, and its plural signification, also indicates that a variety of subjects come under the heading 'immigrant' who elude a common racialization. In contrast to the 'Changing Migration – Continuities of Racism' nexus emphasis on diachronic continuities the 'Complex Migrations – Differential Racialization' nexus makes visible the ways immigrants and settled communities emerge as uniquely racialized subjects through distinct, yet overlapping, hierarchies of legal status, gender, culture, class and social space, facilitating politically discontinuous subject

positions. Within the 'Complex Migrations – Differential Racialization' nexus we also find the creation of a racialized British subject position as a legitimating device for racializing recent migrants. This section assesses how this nexus works towards identifying these multiple, intersecting relations between racialization and migration.

This nexus relates to, but is not synonymous with, the concept of 'differentialist racism' (Taguieff [1987] 2001), which accounts for the persistence of racialized hierarchies despite the mainstreaming of anti-racism, namely through positing the existence of reified and incompatible cultures producing harm when contact occurs (Balibar 2007, 21). As biological racism becomes discredited in political life, the newness of the 'new' racism emerges not by framing race in cultural terms but through regulating and normalizing where differentialist racism can be legitimately applied. For example, instead of differentialist racism being applied to all those made to fall within a particular label of immigrant (e.g. Muslim), it emerges in tandem with a culturalist racism that subdivides their ranking as integrated subjects (e.g. 'good' Muslims, wealthy immigrants etc.) in contradistinction to those cast beyond the pale (e.g. 'bad' Muslims, poor immigrants etc.). Of course, subjects' positioning as 'integrated' means they are always at risk of becoming constituted as a threatening 'them' (Hage 1998; Lentin and Titley 2011; Winter 2011).

Initially, it appears that the familiar insights of this nexus simply enable one to view the creation of 'contingent insiders': the emergence of subjects through a singular practice of dividing and ranking populations as more or less belonging to the nation (Back, Sinha, and Bryan 2012, 140). However, the nexus can also be used to draw attention to more than the 'immigrant' as a category of gradation that situates racialized nationals as a precarious 'us' in relation to new undesired others. The key feature of this nexus is how it makes visible the multiple and co-existing stratifications that emerge through racialization, as opposed to a singular in-group/out-group continuum upon which all migrants (and settled communities) are mapped.

An example of this is Cole's disaggregation of subjects of racialization which distinguishes between 'colour-coded racism' (e.g. black, Asian); 'non-colour-coded racism' (e.g. anti-Semitism); 'xeno-racism' (white immigrants and nth generation citizens); 'anti-asylum-seeker racism' and 'Islamophobia' (Cole 2009, 1673–1682). The construction and effects of these forms of racialization are not interchangeable. For example, Islamophobia is expressed primarily through fear of an 'enemy within' (2009, 1681). In contrast, 'xeno-racism' is said to predominantly focus upon East European EU citizens' economic migration (Cole 2009, 1678). Unlike the figure of the Muslim, who becomes framed as a threat to liberal values or social cohesion, the figure of the East European migrant is primarily framed as a parasite that undermines economic prosperity.

As migrants are differentially racialized, depending on legal status and social esteem, incommensurable effects of racialization ensue. The initial anti-terrorism Prevent Strategy in the UK demonstrated how Muslim nationals became cast as potential terrorists, blurring the lines between policing and community integration initiatives (Kundnani 2009). In contrast, the racialization of economic migrants from the EU creates co-citizens as foreigners in a rather different sense. Unlike the mainstream approach to the British Muslim population, European citizens from overseas are normalized as others whose presence is increasingly considered an artificial imposition by the EU. The possibility of 'repatriating' recent European arrivals leads to an increasingly legitimized debate on whether to strip Europeans of citizenship rights through withdrawal from the EU. What this illustrates is how two distinct migrant/ racialized subject positions are constructed, their interaction with citizenship discourse and the somewhat divergent effects this has upon the racialized individuals themselves.

An important aspect of the 'Complex Migrations – Differential Racialization' nexus is how it also makes visible the production of migrants through the intersections of social positionings, power relations and hierarchies. Gender, class and territorial origin informed differential access to equal citizenship for post-war migrants (Paul 1997, 12–13). This perspective continues to be refined as qualities of racialization become viewed as interdependent with gendered divisions of labour, identifications and reasons for migration (Anthias 2012, 105–106; Yuval-Davis 2011).

These inflections shape the very notions and relationship between racialization and migration. They are captured by Mishra Tarc's discussion of 'race moves' (Mishra Tarc 2013, 381). The idea that 'race moves' enables a focus not only on the shifting subjects of racialization, but how it spatially moves and is transformed as it enters the intimate (Mishra Tarc 2013, 381). For instance, the linkages between racialization and migration make little sense without acknowledging that gendered class relations can 'trump shared experiences of skin colour and ethnicity, where professional elites intensively seek out domestic, childrearing, and other forms of legal and illegal service support in the privacy of their homes, work and play' (Mishra Tarc 2013, 373). Similarly, with regard to Sweden, Mulinari and Neergaard (2012, 16), suggest that gendered and classed positioning is generative of two discourses: 'exploitative racism' of elites sees certain groups of migrants, such as domestic and care workers, as useful supporting their right to be on the national territory; in contrast, 'exclusionary racism' of the 'losers' of neoliberalism, aims to expel migrants, especially those categorized as Muslim from the territory as they are seen as a cultural threat. Seeing the creation of migrant subject positions through the intersections of race, class, gender and status has been a prominent way of revealing the heterogeneous ways migrants experience domination (Gutiérrez-Rodríguez 2010; Yuval-Davis

2011). This manner of producing migrants can be contextualized through a recent analysis of hostility towards the Roma in Italy. Woodcock (2010) demonstrates how the 'nomad camps' of the Roma were not a matter of choice due to a transient lifestyle, but the result of blocked access to rights other migrants enjoy (Woodcock 2010, 474, cf. Sigona 2015). In other words, a diasporic cultural status can itself be produced through racialization, a result of the stereotype of Roma as travellers along with their non-recognition as refugees (in the Italian case, arrivals from post-Yugoslavia) (Woodcock 2010, 474). Gender plays a central role in producing Roma as racialized migrants. Italian women are positioned as threatened by the Roma, in turn symbolically functioning as foundations upon which the victimhood of the authentic Italian people is established (Woodcock 2010, 485–487). This process in turn feeds into security policies justifying demolition of Roma residences, thereby inducing further mobility (Woodcock 2010, 487). Demonstrating how the feminized body becomes a trope for national security, under threat from racialized others (McClintock 1993) in a 'Complex Migrations – Differential Racism' nexus, exemplifies how careful deployments of patriarchal gendered relations within dominant society, and the hyper-sexualized figure of the other, can work in tandem to produce the other as perpetual migrants (symbolic or otherwise).

This nexus not only pays attention to intersectionality, but also hones in on how the racialization of space shapes the positioning of migrants. For instance, Garner's (2013) study of Portishead, England, uncovers how migrants' racialized bodies intersect with the associated infrastructural need for an asylum processing centre and better transportation links, both of which are considered to restructure the environment as other to village life. As asylum seekers are represented as urban bodies, juxtaposed to quiet village life, an urban/rural cleavage emerges as a proxy for racialization. It is expressed through a 'NIMBY-ism' ('Not-in-my-backyard'), enacted in residents' campaigns against city plans that facilitate asylum-seeker entry (Garner 2013, 506, 509–510). The changing ways in which space inflects racialization are demonstrated by Millington's distinction between the ideal-typical pre-1990s inner city and post-1990s outer-inner city. The study explores the dispersal of racialized populations from the inner city to the outer-inner city since the 1990s (Millington 2012, 17–19). This spatial positioning of racialized and migrant groups is class differentiated and dynamic, since the centripetal force of global cities like London for low wage employment is matched by a centrifugal expulsion and displacement of migrants from affluent areas. As racialized migrants disperse into the peripheries of London and beyond, corporate multiculturalist narratives seize on this to rebrand and revitalize dejected areas as multicultural and modern, such as in Southend-on-Sea (Millington 2012, 16). This exemplifies effects of racialization and migration, which cannot be adequately grasped through an analytic of 'Changing

Migration – Continuities of Racism’ nexus. The ‘positive’ urban racialization operates through valuing the benefits of ‘visible’ difference for business and image, without necessarily facilitating migrants to accrue the benefits of this value.

The arrival of new migrants, as a catalyst for rebranding and regenerating towns, can contribute to new spatial dynamics among racialized settled communities. This can have contradictory effects. Consider Peterborough, a small town in the East of England. Recent migrants’ difficulty in accessing affordable housing meant they relied on Pakistani landlords, who in turn used the profits to afford more coveted suburban and rural housing for their own families. Yet, these opportunities for migrants to access inner city housing and settled minorities to access suburban housing was problematized by white locals, who situated both groups as undesirable newcomers. The ‘Complex Migrations – Differential Racism’ nexus brings into focus the ways in which migration can create an economic opportunity for racialized settled communities at the same time as reinforcing racialized moral exclusions (Erel 2011, 2063).

The nexus is helpful for analysing how asylum seekers are positioned. In a study of hierarchical racialized mobility within the EU, Garner argues that the racialization of asylum-seekers is based upon ‘the group’s social status, rather than shared physical characteristics’ (Garner 2013, 504). This indicates how citizenship and residence status has itself begun to play a relatively autonomous role as a mechanism of racialization. Unlike the figure of the economic migrant or British racialized other, the racialization of asylum seekers is based precisely on their lack of group identity, instead this identity emerges as a state of exception, so that the racialized figure of asylum seeker has the unique effect, to enable the state to present itself as sovereign in the face of an increasingly ‘borderless world’ (Garner 2007, 21).

What is distinctive about the contemporary denigration of asylum seekers, and its extension to refugees and European citizens, is that racialized difference has also become a position from which to act as an agent of racialization. It is not only white British populations who express racist attitudes towards migrants. The UK government’s strategy of ‘managed migration’ includes ‘managed settlement’, which seeks to take into account the impact of new arrivals on ‘host’ communities. Importantly, unlike the historical equation of host and white, the host is considered to include diverse ‘settled communities’ (McGhee 2006, 122–123). This raises the under researched issue that racialized British citizens can participate in the process of racializing new migrants. For example, a sizeable minority of those categorized as British Asians have been shown to express anti-immigration sentiment comparable to that of a white British population (Lowles and Painter 2012). Parts of this constituency have, arguably, been represented in UK party politics. Ethnic minority members of UKIP [the UK Independence Party] have staked their inclusion in a multicultural Britain, while acknowledging that racism persists. At the

same time, this becomes a platform from which to claim that the targeted banning of certain migrants does not constitute a racist practice (Nahaboo 2015). Yet, a recent study of black and minority ethnic people's views on migration also highlights ambivalence. Regardless of individual black and minority ethnic people's attitudes towards immigration to the UK, they tended to feel stigmatized and threatened by current anti-immigration rhetoric, even if they were British born or British citizens. The study also highlights that the subject position of 'immigrant' or 'black and minority ethnic citizen' cannot always be neatly delineated, but that many who identify as black and minority British have personal or familial experiences of migration and, while sharing views on immigration with the broader British public, tended to have an overall more positive assessment of the impact of immigration (Khan and Weekes-Bernard 2015).

Through this nexus, we can see that it is not migrants that become racialized. Racialization produces various categories of migrants. Like the 'Changing Migration – Continuities of Racism' nexus, the physical movement of people is less important for how racialization constructs the migrant. But unlike the 'Changing Migrations – Continuities of Racism' nexus, it suggests that migrants are differentially positioned under multiple, and at times contradictory, regimes of domination.

### **The 'Post-racial Migrations – Beyond Racialization' nexus**

The third and final nexus distinguishes contemporary experiences of migration as illustrating that race does not matter. While our own position is to explore and make explicit the usefulness of racialization for the study of migration, we are including this nexus, albeit more briefly, for the sake of completeness. The 'post-racial' covers a range of views: the assertion that racial hierarchies have been overcome, liberal policies that seek to redress racial inequalities with difference-blind strategies, and lastly perspectives that aspire for a society which is no longer institutionally or privately marked by racial perceptibility (Goldberg 2015). But for the purposes of the 'Post-racial Migrations – Beyond Racialization' nexus we delineate two perspectives. One argues that contemporary migration regimes make no formal distinctions based on the 'colour' of migrants. The other focuses on how new technologies of surveillance, such as biometrics, indicate an unprecedented individualization of the migrant that appears to be irreducible to racial categories and hence to racial discrimination.

Since the 1990s, a 'super-diversity' (Vertovec 2007) of migrants' trajectories, legal statuses, ethnic, national and socio-economic positions has meant that new migrants cannot be fully mapped onto post-war immigration discourse. Asylum seekers and migrants arriving from non-Commonwealth countries have experiences of exclusion and subordination that do not always neatly



fit into an analytical frame of white British and postcolonial. New immigration experiences emerge at the interstices of diverse migration trajectories, residence status as well as cultural and linguistic skills. While this observation can certainly support perspectives on race–migration that are attuned to the complexity of racialization, the notion that society is increasingly super-diverse can lead to other conclusions. If language and residential status are of great importance for determining the provision and enjoyment of local public services, it is argued that civic belonging rather than racialization shape the experiences of migrants and settled communities. Knowledge of English, whether through British multiculturalist political theory or far-right discourse, becomes an incontestable civic necessity, and the image of well integrated, English speaking settled ethnic minorities may be invoked as examples of how race is not a helpful category for social analysis or political activism (Ahmed 2004).

Arguing that the racialization of migrants is being overcome is well represented in political and media discourses, especially when migrants emerge as a synonym for new generation citizens. In *The British Dream*, David Goodhart argues that the problem of migration is not to be found in racial practices but rather the capacity of the local community to provide the housing, healthcare and schooling that is required to handle the influx of people (Goodhart 2013). In addition, he finds it problematic to treat race as a central variable for inequalities since the range of advantage and disadvantage, between and within different ethnic groups in Britain, means that no systematic racialization can be discerned (Goodhart 2013). Critics argue that the liberal post-racial turn functions as a euphemism for racist discourses on immigrants. Viewing society as ‘too diverse’ for social democracy and cohesion has performative effects that legitimate racism towards those classed as immigrants (Lentin and Titley 2011).

In a connected development, migration is framed as post-racial via the new technologies of surveillance. This seemingly ‘deracializes’ migration because it individualizes migrants on the basis of particular risky profiles. Post-racialists claim that any racial overtones of these technologies are incidental rather than structurally rooted. Unsurprisingly such claims have been challenged. For instance, a focus on ‘biological citizenship’ is illustrative of a growing strand of research in migration studies analysing how the collection of biometric data bears traces of colonial racialization (Ajana 2012, 864–865). Such critical approaches to the production of migrants through biometrics support the ‘Changing Migrations – Continuities of Racism’ nexus. However, in so far as biometrics draws attention to new processes of racialization, the data regarding residence, access to social rights and physical characteristics produced becomes encoded in highly individualized terms. This is why qualitative research on experiences of applying and holding a biometric residence permits also highlights a more amorphous feeling of being ‘different’ (Warren



and Mavroudi 2011). Thus, while containing elements of racialization, biometrics marks an individualized construction of migrants in excess of processes of race-making.

Recognizing these complexities of racialization has led to two positions. The first post-racial approach abandons racialization as an adequate concept for understanding how immigrants are constructed and stratified. Yet, an analysis employing the 'New Migrations – Differential Racism' nexus would come to the conclusion that these examples testify to the dynamic subjects and effects of racialization. Therefore, the inclusion of racialized nationals facilitates the right to refuse 'national belonging' (Hage 1998) to new migrants. Alternatively, the second 'biological citizenship' perspective cuts across citizenship status to shape the meaning of civil liberties for all citizens and migrants (as exemplified by the ID cards debates) (Ajana 2012, 856). At first glance, this appears to confirm a post-racial turn in migration controls, further substantiating the simultaneously generalized and individualized feeling of difference for recipients of the new forms of governmentality. However, the claim that race is becoming obsolete is problematic as the new technological practices of securitization disproportionately affects non-white others (Ajana 2012). While the post-racial argument suggests that racism is external to European identity (Lentin 2014), we would problematize this, and instead propose to explore in detail how migrations and racializations are co-constructed in differentiated, dynamic and complex ways.

## Conclusion

This paper sought to understand and highlight the distinct ways in which race and racialization are invoked in research on migration. The three race–migration nexi identified provide a means to make sense of contemporary connections between racialization and migration. While there are overlaps between them, the different perspectives presented emphasize different subjects of a politics of race and migration, different analytic foci and ultimately different anti-racist strategies. Our argument is that the way in which the nexus of migration and racialization is conceived and conceptualized is important not only to understand contemporary migrations empirically. Identifying these race–migration nexi helps make more explicit shifting and evolving forms of constituting racial subjects through migration regimes. This can be applied for analysing how the relation between racialization and migration is lived out in a range of social sites, such as the labour market. Racialization is an important analytic concept to make sense of such processes and relations. Identifying and clarifying the range of ways it is employed in migration research hopes to strengthen future work in both migration and critical race studies. While the race–migration nexi we have

identified are often invoked as if they are competing truth claims, this paper highlights how each brings into focus a different aspect of analysis, each with different effects on how to formulate and pursue anti-racism. By focusing on the race–migration nexi, we were also able to highlight how agents and objects of racialization can emerge within the same broad analytical approach.

This review has focused on describing the analytical purview of different race–migration nexi. We believe that its value for scholars working across race and migration studies is that it enables a more reflexive understanding of how racialization can be used as a concept to analyse the positioning of contemporary migrants. Yet, the analysis can also pose questions as to the implications for an anti-racist politics afforded by each. The ‘Changing Migrations – Continuities of Racism’ nexus underlines the significance of existing politics of anti-racism and equal opportunities as tools for combatting racism. This builds on and extends black Britons’ anti-racist struggles, which were often closely bound up with struggles against racist immigration controls (e.g. Fekete 2001; Sivanandan 1990; Virdee 2014). Looking at the conflation of migration status and racialization in British far-right racism, Redclift argues that it has ‘legitimated the diminishing protection for foreign nationals living in the UK, [and] has also targeted long-settled black and minority ethnic communities’ (2014, 579). So contemporary cultural ‘common-sense racism’ ‘positions asylum seekers, new migrants and Muslims as the enemies within and without our borders’ (Redclift 2014, 579). While this can be read as an affirmation of the centrality of a black British subject for formulating anti-racist politics, the ‘Complex Migrations – Differential Racism’ nexus attends to how the political construction of a ‘black’ identity has lost its stability as a pan-ethnic point of anti-racist identification (Hall 1992), noting how the racializing culture and colour lines have become supplemented by new multiple categories of citizenship. This nexus invites anti-racist struggles to take into account the overlapping and discrepant colour and culture lines, drawing attention to how racialization operates through multiple migration pathways and the citizenship and residence rights they are bound up in. Finally, these analyses, we argue render questionable the ‘Postracial Migration – Beyond Racialization’ nexus’s claim that the current complexities of migration undoes the necessity of an anti-racist politics to engage with racialization both alongside and through migration politics. Rather, the contemporary intersections of race and religion, particularly Islam, are closely intertwined in the spectre of ‘the Muslim’ as a migrant/security threat. Forced migration and refugee movements across Europe have brought race into the everyday domain in ways that have framed debates about the social and cultural identities of Europe and the foundations of the EU. Racialization remains an indispensable analytic to understand such shifts.

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